

**Arlington School Committee Regular Meeting  
December 15, 2022  
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**6:30 pm. Open Meeting**

The meeting started promptly at 6:30 p.m. and the Chair confirmed attendance of Dr. Allison-Ampe remotely. All other School Committee Members present: B. Hayner, L. Kardon, J. Morgan, P. Schlichtman, J. Thielman, Liz Exton. Additional attendees included Dr. Homan, Dr. MacNeal, Mr. Mason, Mr. Spiegel, Ms. Elmer, Ms. Keyes (AEA Rep) and Arlington Police Department Officer J. Searbo.

**6:32 p.m. The Performing Arts Program**

After the Chair opened the meeting, the Arlington High School Performing Arts Program musicians provided a delightful musical performance under the direction of J. Wei, the Director of Performing Arts.

**6:35 p.m. Public Comment**

The Chair invited the public speaker who was signed up to speak, remotely, Mr. Michael Crosby. Mr. Crosby thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak. He is concerned about the unschooling of two of his children (not called home-schooled) and the ramifications of such.

**6:43 pm. School Committee Appointment to Arlington Human Rights Commission**

Laurie Key offered a brief synopsis on why she would like to be the next AHR Commissioner Representative to the Arlington School Committee Representative.

Mr. Hayner made a motion and it was seconded by Jeff Thielman to approve the motion to appoint Ms. Key as the next AHR Commission Representative to the Arlington School Committee.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes. A unanimous vote.

**6:45 p.m. Performing Arts Report**

J. Wei opened her presentation by introducing all of the wonderful performers who had just performed for the School Committee at the opening of the meeting.

J. Wei introduced the Performing Arts Vision Statement.

She thanked the School Committee for eliminating the fees for Instrumental Music Programs and presented the wins of the Performing Arts Program. She presented the instrumental enrollment numbers and explained the increasing enrollment in the Programs from Elementary thru High School. There are a total of 1,112 instrumental students in addition to over 600 students singing in the chorus. She explained that there are two teams of instrumental teachers who teach simultaneously, given the increase in enrollments. Ms. Wei explained that family

engagement in the Program is key and various actions have taken place to support family engagement, one of which is a Practice Buddies Program. This Program pairs an advanced AHS string student with an elementary string student with one-on-one practice sessions. A student explained how she and J. Wei developed the Program. An eighth grade student who is also a member of the Practice Buddies explained her experience in the Program. Another action step being taken to support family engagement is the implementation of Progress Reports provided mid- and end-of-year. Mr. Simon explained the details of these reports and how they help with the communication with parents. A virtual tour of a beginner elementary classroom was presented to the Committee, but the audio would not work. J. Wei next explained the process of Music Technology which included a Chrome Music Lab. D. Fiorentini appeared in a video to explain the K-5 Digital Music Program but the sound did not work so J. Huang gave a brief overview. N. Smith was present and discussed the 6-8 grade Music Program - Soundtrap. Mr. DiTomaso spoke about the 9-12 Music Technology Program. An overview of K-5 General Music was provided by Ms. Murray, from the Brackett, who gave a brief overview of what takes place in the Kindergarten Music Program and what happens over the first six years of the Elementary Music Program. Ms. Wei concluded her presentation with a note on the time and courage it takes to be a musician and the countless joy she experiences in this Program.

Questions from the School Committee included the budget request given the increase in students, the audition-based rather than pay-to-play, links to the performances from the presentation, more help to parents to connect to the right people in the Program. The Chair thanked the presenters and Ms. Wei for their music and work they are all doing. Dr. Homan commented that the heart, soul and time involved is evident in what we witnessed this evening. Dr. Homan thanked them and J. Wei for her work.

#### **7:22 p.m. Stratton School Improvement Plan**

Mr. Hanna, principal of Stratton School introduced Dr. O'Brien, Assistant Principal, and thanked his faculty and staff at Stratton School for being part of their growth (his 10th year at the school).

Dr. O'Brien presented the Stratton successes and Stratton challenges. Successes included PMD Meetings, Learning Walks, highest ELA and Math scores in Arlington, increased achievement in early reading and early writing, a new playground, higher than the Arlington average for Learning Model, Well Being, staff relationships, work with G. Thompson-Grove and launch of Instructional Leadership Team. The challenges for Stratton included their scores as the lowest in Cultural Awareness and Action and mid-range struggling readers.

Next, Mr. Hanna presented the Stratton Goals: Goal #1 would reflect a 10% higher favorable response to the Cultural Awareness and Action Survey, Goal #2 would reflect an increase in overall reading achievement for the aggregate and subgroups, and Goal #3 would reflect a 10% increase in positive responses in categories of Challenging Feelings and Cultural Awareness and Action.

Mr. Hanna asked for resources to support his Goals by launching an IDEAS Course, continued consultations with Gene Thompson-Grove and an increase to a FTE in the library.

Mr. Schlichtman asked for a clarification for next year's SIP with a fully-developed plan. Data shows extraordinary success but doesn't have the ability to aggregate the data for students. He asked that the measurable outcomes be addressed more clearly. Ms. Morgan asked about the SLC-A not specifically being mentioned in the plan. M. Hanna answered the School Committee questions accordingly. Dr. Homan commended the Stratton School Instructional Leadership Team work.

### **7:41 p.m. Thompson School Improvement Plan**

Principal Donato presented the Thompson School Improvement Plan (and distributed pineapples). She is appreciative, proud and joyful to be the Principal at Thompson School and was joined by her amazing Assistant Principal, C. Chevalier and Math Coach, D. Connelly.

Ms. Donato reviewed her overall Agenda for her School Improvement Plan, which started with an overview of the Thompson School which is composed of 526 students and 75 staff members. The Thompson School Priorities included: Objective 1: increasing math assessment benchmarks of all students in all grades, Objective 2: establishing a PBIS Team to support staff and students and increase the awareness of cultural bias, and, Objective 3: to increase MCAS and benchmark math assessments by engaging in professional learning opportunities.

Principal Donato next presented the Thompson Glows and Grows. Glows - things going well, included the implementation of an Instructional Leadership Team, the use of ACE time for staff collaboration, growth in MCAS scores, establishment of a PBIS Team, implementation of schoolwide expectations and pineapple reward recognition system and building based PD with PFLAG. The Grows for Thompson included: continuing the coaching and collaboration of staff, measuring PBIS impact, assessing needs for bias and identify development, implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices, and thoughtful instruction with students on race-related topics.

Principal Donato commented that the fallout from the pandemic continues and students and families are feeling a cumulative effect of the last few years and we need to keep this in mind as we move forward.

Mr. Schlichtman questioned the MCAS number and asked that they refer to them another way. He appreciated the data as a starting point. He asked for an explanation of how to assist Thompson or is it a district-wide gap of achievement/growth. Dr. Homan asked that this be an issue for her, rather than the leaders, to take care of it. Mr. Thielman thanked everyone for their SIPs and asked to have these further discussions in a CIAA Subcommittee meeting. Ms. Morgan asked about the PBIS Program. Thompson is in year 2 of a 3 year plan. Office referrals have decreased; need a system to track them. Dr. Homan thanked Principal Donato and Ms. Exton appreciated the emotions involved.

### **8:00 p.m. Budget Requests Report**

Dr. Homan presented the Budget Requests Report and Mr. Mason walked everyone through how it is formatted and how to read it. This is a second round of a comprehensive budget plan, involving intense conversations. The Cabinet Team meets with all Administrators/Leaders to discuss needs and asks. Themes emerging this year include increasing enrollment in the secondary level (which will then move into AHS). The surrounding staffing is what is needed next to support these larger class sizes. Another emerging theme is support that is needed. A lot of discussion about librarian staffing, technology teaching at elementary level, increase in Special Ed, student enrollment, english learners, welcoming center, build out in DEI, etc. Some positions could be posted now rather than later. Mr. Mason is happy to answer any questions and they are open to going back to the leaders for clarification.

Mr. Kardon asked what happens next. Dr. Homan and Dr. Allison-Ampe will be scheduling a Budget Subcommittee Meeting next week. From the discussions today, rank the priorities; what we need vs. what's up for discussion. Follow up meeting with the full Admin Team on Budget is on January 3. We need to analyze contractual obligations but we are going to operate conservatively for the initial draft. The salary obligations/contracts require a little less guess work since they are not negotiating 7 contracts.

Mr. Schlichtman found the report full as well as thoughtful. Mr. Mason gave an overview of how the report was formatted, assembled and why. Mr. Schlichtman asked for an Excel sheet so that they can be sorted and prioritized. Ms. Morgan asked who set the priority numbers – Mr. Mason explained that it was an average; the requestor prioritized. Ms. Morgan thanked them for this work. Mr. Thielman asked Dr. Homan when she would provide the School Committee with her priorities and she responded that they will be presented at the next meeting. Dr. Allison-Ampe will send specific questions to Mr. Mason. Ms. Exton asked if the K-5 literacy resources included professional development and about the proposed changes to the curriculum coordinator roles for ELA/Humanities. Her questions were answered accordingly.

### **8:24 Financial Report**

Mr. Mason provided his Monthly Financial Report as of November 30, 2022. Some budgets that were incorrect have been updated. The report included General Fund at a Glance with the project balance and the Budget vs. Actual by Budget Transfer Categories, Revolving and Special Revenue and Grants at a Glance and Grants at a Glance.

Mr. Schlichtman asked about contracted transportation numbers and Professional Tech Services - Mr. Mason answered accordingly.

No other questions.

### **8:31 p.m. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Homan reported that all forums have been completed, Strategic Planning Meetings are completed and Dr. Homan thanked everyone for all of the support. She reported the status of the Timeline; initial drafts are completed, refinements will be presented at the January 12

meeting. Year- to -year cost-out will be generated by Jan 12, and the draft is to be completed in late January.

Overviews/updates of the Strategic Plan were presented with elaboration on Strategic Priorities 1, 2, 3, and 4. In addition, Dr. Homan presented updates on 1st grade computer science, instructional rounds, deeper learning, before school care, APS Calendar Committee meetings, Ottoson transportation, Deputy Superintendent search and, lastly, enrollments.

**8:48 p.m. Review and Possible Vote on Current Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy.**

Dr. Homan explained that we need to update and have eyes on this policy biannually. It has the date of 2017. We just want to make sure the date is current. We are going to go through and look at the intervention and prevention plan and there have been some updates this week from legal counsel. This is for compliance purposes. Mr. Schlichtman commented that we vote on this policy.

A motion was made by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Thielman that we move to suspend the rules to move to second read.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, and Ms. Exton, yes. Vote that on

A motion was made by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Hayner to approve the policy JICFB.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

**8:50 p.m.. Policies for Second Read/Possible Vote on Policy BEDH-E**

Ms. Exton amended the policy as directed by Jeff Thielman whereas the notification from the public to speak during Public Comment be amended moving from a 3:00 p.m. deadline to a 6:00 p.m. deadline.

A motion was made by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Ms. Morgan to amend the proposed Policy BEDH-E with a sign up time to 6:00 p.m. from 3:00 p.m. . Mr. Hayner asked to make it clear - would this person that walks in be at the bottom of the list and the Chair replied yes. Dr. Allison-Ampe and Mr. Schlichtman will not support the motion..

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, no, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison Ampe, no, Ms. Exton yes.

Mr. Schlichtman made a motion to approve and it was seconded by Mr. Thielman, the proposed policy BEDH-E as amended.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

Policy ECEV - A motion was made by Mr. Schlichtman and seconded by Mr. Hayner to approve/adopt Policy ECEV. Mr. Kardon will not support it.

Mr. Schlichtman made a motion and it was seconded by Mr. Hayner to approve Policy ECE-V, Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (new policy). Dr. Homan explained that we are reliant on the Arlington Police Department to help with monitoring the charging stations.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, no, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

Mr. Schlichtman made a motion to approve and it was seconded by Mr. Kardon to approve the second reason on the following policies as follows: Policy JFED, Policy JICA, Policy AC, Policy JB, Policy GBA, Policy GCF, Policy AC-R, Policy JIC, Policy BED-B

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

### **9:03 p.m. School Committee Meeting Dates for SY2023-2024, SY2024-2025, SY2025-2026, First Read.**

The proposed School Committee Dates for the next three years were presented by the Chair with the goal that the Superintendent would like to prepare the calendar for the next three years. Two administrative changes were made by the Chair to avoid the LABBB Graduation. A second read will be brought to the January 12, 2023 meeting.

### **9:05 p.m. Consent Agenda**

Warrant #23130 in the amount of \$507,432.77, dated December 13, 2022.

A motion was made by Mr. Hayner and seconded by Mr. Schlichtman to approve the Consent Agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

### **9:10 p.m. Subcommittee/Liaison Reports/Announcements**

- Budget, Dr. Allison-Ampe: Met on December 9.
- Community Relations, Mr. Hayner: no report.

- Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability, Ms. Morgan: - meeting on December 21, 2022.
  - Facilities, Mr. Thielman: Met on December 12, RE: leakage, mice, rodents, temperatures in schools.
  - Policies & Procedures, Paul Schlichtman: We've done enough for now but will be looking for Budget and Curriculum Policy changes
  - AHS Building Committee, Jeff Thielman, Chair: Meeting on January 3, 2023
  - Superintendent Evaluation, Len Kardon: No report.
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- Liaison Reports - None
  - Announcements - Dr. MacNeal was at Rotary and they greatly appreciated his attendance. Mr Schlichtman had a wonderful experience on Instructional Rounds.
  - Future Agenda Items - Athletic Report

### **9:12 p.m. Adjournment**

Mr. Thielman made a motion and it was seconded by Mr. Hayner to adjourn from the meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hayner, yes, Mr. Kardon, yes, Ms. Morgan, yes, Mr. Schlichtman, yes, Mr. Thielman, yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe, yes, Ms. Exton, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth M. Diggins  
Administrative Assistant  
Arlington School Committee